United Nations A/72/855

General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 May 2018

Original: English

Seventy-second session
Agenda item 72
Promotion and protection of human rights

Letter dated 2 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you information on the measures taken by the Government of Uzbekistan to promote gender equality, protect children's rights and ensure the interests of youth (see annex).

I would appreciate it if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 72.

(*Signed*) Bakhtiyor **Ibragimov**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

18-07307 (E) 150518 160518

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 2 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Measures taken by the Government of Uzbekistan to promote gender equality, protect children's rights and ensure the interests of youth

As part of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, the Government of Uzbekistan, under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, is making extensive efforts to increase the public, political and social engagement of women, create an environment conducive to their self-fulfilment in various areas and sectors, ensure respect for their rights and legitimate interests, provide comprehensive support for mothers and children, and strengthen the institution of the family.

A national action plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has been drawn up and adopted.

As a result of amendments to national law aimed at encouraging the participation of women in political activity, the number of women parliamentarians has increased significantly. With regard to the economy, women and men represent 44 per cent and 56 per cent, respectively, of the workforce. Women account for 40.3 per cent of those employed in education, 37.7 per cent in health care, 28.4 per cent in culture and the arts, and 26.4 per cent in science and scientific services, while the number of women working in small businesses and private enterprise has increased significantly.

Over the past year, efforts have been made to improve laws and regulations. A presidential decree on measures to radically improve activities aimed at supporting women and strengthening the institution of the family has been adopted. Pursuant to the decree, the following priority activities have been identified for the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan:

- Effective implementation of the State policy to support women and protect their rights and legitimate interests, and measures to boost their role and engagement in the country's public and political life;
- Timely identification of problems affecting women and determination of categories of women who need assistance or are disadvantaged, including women with disabilities, and provision to them of social, legal, psychological and financial support;
- Provision of all kinds of targeted support for women with regard to employment, the improvement of working conditions, and efforts to recruit more women, particularly young women in rural areas, to family and private businesses and the handicraft trade.

The *Oila* Scientific and Practical Research Centre has been established within the Cabinet of Ministers, along with a number of local branches, to carry out in-depth and innovative applied research on matters of family values and traditions. In addition to organizing comprehensive studies on reproductive health and the demographic development of the family, the Centre is cooperating with similar international and foreign organizations and research institutions.

A public foundation to support women and the family has been established; its principal tasks are to provide financial support to disadvantaged women and families and women with disabilities, and to facilitate the implementation of women's entrepreneurial initiatives.

Another important provision of the decree concerns the establishment, within family polyclinics and rural health centres, of women's clinics that provide essential advisory services to adolescent girls and women of childbearing age.

Major efforts are under way in Uzbekistan to improve living conditions and provide subsidized housing to persons in need of social support and persons with disabilities. In 2017, 1,207 women with disabilities who needed housing were provided with a place to live. In order to accelerate these efforts, under the decree the Cabinet of Ministers was given the task of drafting and adopting regulations on the construction and provision of affordable housing for women in need of social support.

A programme of comprehensive measures to support women and strengthen the institution of the family has been adopted with the aim of carrying out the priority activities and tasks set out in the decree.

In the years since the country gained independence, an integral system of State social support for mothers and children has been established and the Act on Social Services for Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities and Other Vulnerable Groups has been adopted.

As a result of the measures taken, the maternal mortality rate has fallen over the past five years from 23.1 to 19 per 100,000 births, the under-5 mortality rate has fallen from 14.8 to 13.9 and the infant mortality rate from 11 to 10.7. The provision of free vaccinations to all children up to the age of 2 years has made it possible to completely eradicate diseases such as diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Almost 100 per cent of children under the age of 14 receive thorough medical examinations twice a year, and women of childbearing age receive them once a year.

Comprehensive measures are being taken to promote the employment of women, particularly young women, and to widen their involvement in entrepreneurship. Specifically, under the employment programme for 2017, 84,100 women were provided with employment. A total of 62,700 jobs have been created under special programmes, including 20,400 in industry, 14,600 in the service sector, 14,400 in agriculture and 13,200 in construction and infrastructure development, while 7,300 jobs have been created through the revival of inactive businesses.

Children under the age of 18 make up 40 per cent of the population of Uzbekistan, and young people under 30 account for 64 per cent. In that connection, the priority of State policy with regard to human rights and freedoms is to create the optimum conditions for the development of a well-rounded younger generation and for the physical, intellectual and spiritual development of children and young people. As part of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Rights of the Child (Safeguards) Act, the Guardianship and Custody Act and other legislative acts have been adopted; they not only enshrine but also elaborate on the main principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which sets out the specific obligations of the State and society with regard to the fulfilment of those principles and provisions.

A particular landmark was the establishment, on the initiative of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, of the Youth Union of Uzbekistan and the designation of 30 June as Youth Day.

The Youth Union of Uzbekistan is a youth organization that is engaged in the consistent and effective implementation of the State policy of comprehensive support

for young people and the fundamental reform of the system of protection of their rights and legitimate interests, taking into account the opinions and suggestions of the general public, in particular representatives of young people.

The priorities of the Youth Union are as follows:

- To make the Youth Union an organization that cooperates effectively with the State authorities, non-governmental non-profit organizations and other civil society institutions to implement the State youth policy, carrying out vocational activities under the slogan "Young people – building the future";
- To protect the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of young people and to instil in them respect for national and universal human values and a commitment to the ideas of independence, national identity, love for their homeland and ownership of its fate, selflessness, and protection of the homeland against various ideological threats;
- To increase the engagement of young people in reforms aimed at building a democratic State and developing civil society, and to boost the numbers of dynamic, energetic and spiritual young people who are able to think independently, have a strong life philosophy, are open-minded and highly knowledgeable, and are capable of harnessing all their strength, knowledge and potential for the benefit of their people and taking responsibility for the country's future;
- To ensure that young people have access to modern careers on decent terms, provide them with employment, develop their business skills, widen their involvement in small businesses and private enterprise, encourage their initiatives, help them to realize their intellectual and creative potential, and train them to become educated, dynamic and enterprising young managers who are actively involved in the reforms under way in our country;
- To develop in young people strong defences against various ideological threats, in particular religious extremism, terrorism and other radical ideas, by raising their level of education.

In general, Uzbekistan, as a fully-fledged international actor, intends to continue its consistent efforts to ensure gender equality, protect children's rights, and pay attention to and promote the interests of young people in order to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.